

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-1, 7

THE WASHINGTON POST

23 May 1978

medien
HBC
file

Broadening Of Korean Probe Seen Up to 10 in House Reportedly Received Cash From Diplomat

By Charles R. Babcock

Washington Post Staff Writer

House investigators have evidence indicating as many as 10 present House members received cash payments from former South Korean Ambassador Kim Dong Jo.

Sources familiar with the House investigation of South Korean influence-buying said yesterday that this information — apparently from supersensitive U.S. intelligence reports — is the reason Leon Jaworski, special counsel to the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, is pushing so strongly for passage of a House resolution demanding sworn testimony from Kim.

Kim's corroboration of such information would mean the members in question broke the constitutional ban on receiving gifts from foreign governments. Many members who accepted cash from Washington businessman Tongsun Park, accused of being an agent of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, said they had no way of knowing Park represented Korea. Members who took money from diplomat Kim would have no such excuse.

Jaworski alluded to the potentially explosive new evidence about payments from Kim during testimony yesterday before the House International Relations Committee.

The committee is scheduled to mark up the resolution calling for Kim's testimony this morning.

Rep. Clement J. Zablocki (D-Wis.), chairman of the committee, said after yesterday's hearing that the resolution would have to be amended to ensure passage.

In his testimony yesterday, Jaworski referred to public hearings last fall where witnesses said Kim had given an envelope stuffed with \$100 bills to a House member, who returned it. But the former Watergate special prosecutor also referred to

"information that we cannot now disclose" to support his assertion that "I do know the activity [payments from Kim] went on."

Later, in answer to questions from Rep. Charles W. Whalen Jr. (R-Ohio), Jaworski said that in addition to the public testimony "there are a number [of additional names] as to whom we have a showing" that there were payments from Kim.

Despite Jaworski's subtle references to still undisclosed payments by the former South Korean ambassador, some committee members—including several who are themselves under scrutiny in the investigation—seemed to side yesterday with the State Department position opposing the resolution.

Warren Christopher, deputy secretary of state, argued that the resolution, which threatens to cut off aid to South Korea unless Kim's testimony is provided, would set a dangerous precedent.

Christopher said repeatedly that the Carter administration had to oppose the resolution because of its "overt pressure" and threat of coercion. He also said its passage would permit other nations to call for similar testimony from American diplomats.

Christopher said any consideration of cutting foreign aid to South Korea should be made only on the basis of what is "in the best interests of the United States." He suggested that Jaworski accept the final South Korean offer of allowing Kim to talk by phone to House Speaker Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill Jr. (D-Mass.).

Jaworski flatly rejected that offer as being "a mockery of the Congress." He countered that failure to gain Kim's sworn testimony would create a precedent worse than the one Christopher feared.

"It is my opinion that the people of this nation will not accept legal niceties as an explanation for the failure of Congress to complete its investigation of corruption in its own chambers," Jaworski said.

"They will not understand why corrupt officials who deal with diplomats may escape exposure and sanction while others must face prosecution," he added.

By the end of the hearing, Zablocki was suggesting changes in the resolution to soften the threat of a cut in aid. Jaworski was amenable to a point, but said he could not accept suggested phrasing that Kim's testimony be only preferably under oath.